



**NOAA**  
**FISHERIES**

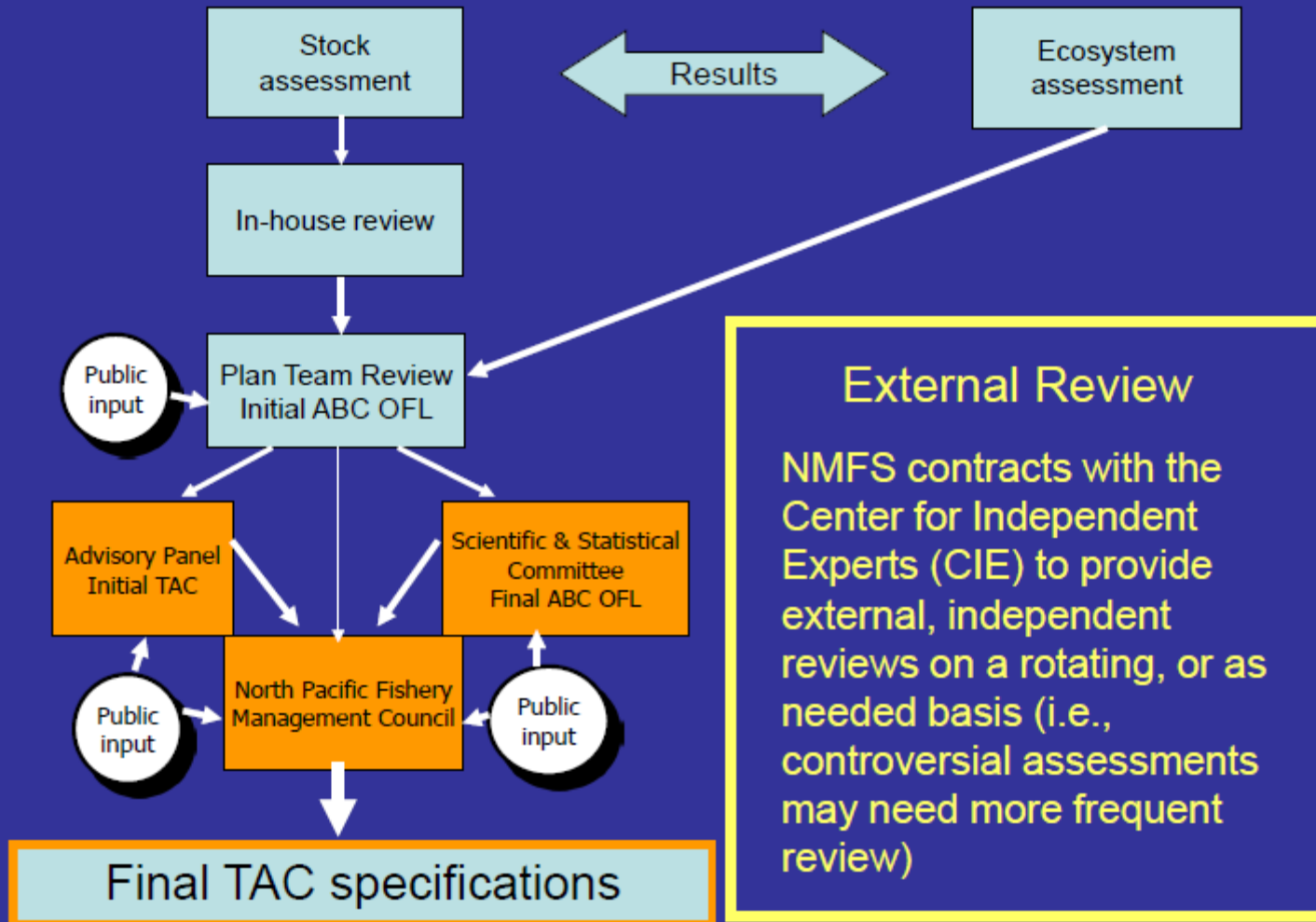
Alaska Fisheries  
Science Center

# Peer Review Process

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AFSC Stock Assessment Review  
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## *Schematic of Review Process*



# Peer Review Process

## In-House Review



- Process begins with annual memo from stock assessment program managers to AFSC staff (copy to ADF&G)
  - List of lead stock assessment author assignments & designation of “full assessment” or “update” for each assignment
  - Notation for expected presentation at Sept. PT meeting for review of proposed changes to data/model(s)/assessment
  - Deadline for completion of stock assessments for in-house review
  - Deadline for preliminary and final submission to the Plan Teams
- 2<sup>nd</sup> memo with in-house reviewer assignments and deadlines
- Stock assessment guidelines provide TOR for assessments and reviews



# In-house Review Process

## Strengths/Challenges/Solutions



- Strengths
  - TOR, Stock Assessment Guidelines
  - Reviewers assigned to each assessment
  - Deadlines to accommodate review
  - No documents released without an in-house review
- Challenges
  - Very compacted time schedule; assessments use current year's data
  - Balance to provide sufficient time for assessment development and in-house review
  - Limited pool of in-house reviewers
- Solutions
  - Enhanced communication (survey, ageing, observer programs)
  - Expand pool of AFSC in-house reviewers (outside of stock assessment programs)
  - Other???



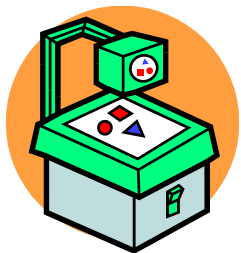
# Peer Review in the NPFMC Process

## Plan Teams



- The Plan Teams serve as the first (external) reviewers of stock assessments
  - Comprised of stock assessment scientists, marine mammal & seabird experts, ecosystem & socioeconomics researchers, regional fishery management experts
  - Regional expertise from NMFS, state fishery agencies (WDF&W, ADF&G), universities (UW, UAF), IPHC
  - TOR for groundfish and crab plan teams (<http://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/membership/PlanTea/Groundfish/PTterms.pdf>)
- The Plan Teams provide the Council with advice in the areas of regulatory management, natural and social science, mathematics, and statistics as they relate to the groundfish and crab fisheries of the BS/AI and GOA
- The Plan Teams review stock assessments, compile SAFE reports, make recommendations to SSC





# Plan Team Review Process Transparency and Public Input

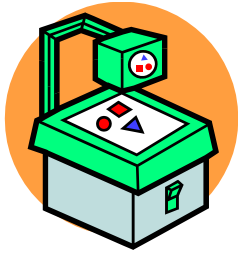


- SAFE documents available to Plan Teams 1-2 weeks prior to Plan Team meeting to be reviewed
- Public is given access to documents prior to Plan Team meetings, documents available at meetings
- Plan Team meetings are open to the public and notification provided in the *Federal Register*
- Draft agenda prepared in advance, includes opportunity for public comment
- Minutes of the each meeting are prepared, distributed to Plan Team members and posted to Council website

# Peer Review in the NPFMC Process Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)



- The SSC provides scientific review of all main scientific analyses that come before the Council
- Composed of leading scientists in biology, economics, statistics, social science, ecology (NMFS/AFSC, AK-WA-OR, universities)
- Scientific peer review to ensure quality and integrity of scientific assessments used to determine biologically acceptable annual catch limits (ACLs)
  - Review determines scientific validity of assumptions, quality of data, methods, results and conclusions
  - Consideration and review of Plan Team recommendations
  - Determination of tier level and ABC and OFL for groundfish, OFL for crab
- SSC guidelines for review of SAFE documents: ([http://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/membership/SSC/SSC\\_SAFEguidelines](http://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/membership/SSC/SSC_SAFEguidelines))



# SSC Review Process

## Transparency and Public Input



- All documents reviewed by SSC are made available to the public in advance of the meeting in which they are reviewed (incl. SAFE documents & Plan Team reports)
- SSC meetings usually held in conjunction with public Council meeting and public notice is provided in advance
- SSC conducts all meetings and discussion in public (exception for election of officers and Plan Team membership recommendations)
- Agenda includes opportunity for public comment
- SSC publicly presents findings and recommendations to Council at the meeting
- SSC report published on Council website



## *Schematic of Review Process*

